

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
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USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 4331

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PINT CH
SUBJECT: CHIEF NCNA REPORTER (HONG KONG) COMMENTS ON
TENG HSIAO-PING AND OTHER ISSUES

SUMMARY: AT AN APRIL 16 DINNER WITH CONGENOFF AND HIS
WIFE, CHIEF HONG KONG NCNA REPORTER SZETU KEUNG STATED
THAT IS WAS UNLIKELY TENG HSIAO-PING WOULD RE-APPEAR
SOON AND IMPLIED THAT HIS CASE HAS NOT BEEN FULLY
RESOLVED. SZETU ALSO VOLUNTEERED THAT THE RECENT
PUBLICITY SURROUNDING EXECUTIONS IN CHINA WAS DESIGNED
TO SERVE AS A NEGATIVE EXAMPLE TO POTENTIAL LAWBREAKERS
BUT ADDED THAT THERE REALLY HADN'T BEEN DRAMATIC
INCREASE IN CAPITAL PUNISHMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. IN CONTRAST WITH HIS PREVIOUS RELUCTANCE TO
DISCUSS INTERNAL POLITICAL ISSUES, HONG KONG'S CHIEF
NCNA REPORTER SZETU KEUNG AND HIS WIFE (WHO ALSO
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WORKS AT NCNA) ELABORATED IN SOME DETAIL ON THE
TENG HSIAO-PING ISSUE WITH CONGENOFF AND HIS WIFE
OVER DINNER. CONGENOFF NOTED THAT THE UST-
PUBLISHED VOLUME 5 OF MAO'S SELECTED WORKS HAD
MADE SEVERAL FAVORABLE REFERENCES TO "COMRADE
HSIAO-PING". SZETU QUICKLY RESPONDED THAT THIS WAS
A TERM OF ENDEARMENT FOR MAO'S "COMRADES IN ARMS"

AND WAS INDICATIVE OF HIS CLOSE WORKINGS RELATIONSHIP WITH TENG AT THE TIME. SZETU STILL MAINTAINED THAT TENG'S CASE WAS AN "INTERNAL CONTRADICTION AMONG THE PEOPLE" AND ADDED THAT HE "STILL HAS MISTAKES". CONGENOFF ASKED IF THIS MEANT THAT TENG STILL HAD TO UNDERGO A PROCESS OF SELF-EXAMINATION. SZETU'S WIFE RESPONDED THAT SELF-EXAMINATION IS QUITE COMMON AND "WE HAVE MADE THEM IN THE PAST". THE IMPLICATION WAS LEFT THAT TENG HAD YET FULLY TO ATONE FOR HIS PAST MISTAKES AND HIS CASE WAS STILL UNDER DISCUSSION.

2. CONGENOFF THEN ASKED IF TENG MIGHT RE-APPEAR AT THE UPCOMING TACHING CONFERENCE, AND SZETU EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT HE WOULD RETURN IN THIS FASHION OR WOULD SUDDENLY RE-APPEAR. HE SAID TENG "WOULD RE-APPEAR IN ANOTHER WAY" BUT WOULD NOT ELABORATE EXCEPT TO SAY "IT ULL TAKE TIME". THE TACHING CONFERENCE, HE ADDED, MAY IN FACT BE ALREADY IN SESSION BUT AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CONFERENCE MAY NOT BE MADE UNTIL THE END OF THE MEETING SINCE THE PUBLICATION OF VOLUME 5 OF MAO'S SELECTED WORKS WOULD OVER-SHADOW ALL ELSE FOR THE TIME BEING.

3. DURING A GENERAL DISCUSSION ABOUT THE "GANG OF FOUR" SZETU VOLUNTEERED THAT THE "FOUR" WOULD NOT BE BROUGHT TO TRIAL IN THE WESTERN LEGAL SENSE FOR THEIR POLITICAL CRIMES SINCE CHINESE AUTHORITIES DEAL MORE DIRECTLY WITH CRIMINAL CASES. HE SAID CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT THERE REALLY HADN'T BEEN A DRAMATIC INCREASE IN EXECUTION FOR RAPE, MURDER AND "ATTACKS AGAINST PROPERTY" AS THE WESTERN PRESS HAS IMPLIED. INSTEAD, EXECUTION OF CRIMINALS IS NOW BEING PUBLICIZED AS A NEGATIVE EXAMPLE AND A WARNING. OFTEN, BEFORE MAY DAY, MANY KMT SPIES ARE SHOT SINCE SABOTAGE BY KMT INFILTRATORS DRAMATICALLY INCREASE AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR. ESPECIALLY IN KWANGTUNG. HE ADDED THAT MANY OF THESE "SPIES" HAD BEEN SENT FROM HONG KONG.

4. TOUCHING BRIEFLY ON THE DROUGHT, SZETU NOTED THAT THE SITUATION IN KWANGTUNG HAD "IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY" DUE TO INCREASED PRECIPITATION. HE SAW THE DROUGHT AS A CHALLENGE WHICH IS BEING MET BY INCREASED IRRIGATION AND WATER CONSERVANCY EFFORTS. THE SITUATION IN NORTH CHINA, HOWEVER, WAS STILL QUITE SERIOUS.

5. IN RESPONSE, TO A QUESTION, SZETU STATED THAT
FU HAO, PRC AMBASSADOR TO HANOI, HAD NOT BEEN
RE-CALLED FOR POLITICAL REASONS BUT IS DUE FOR
RE-ASSIGNMENT. HE SAID ANOTHER AMBASSADOR WOULD
BE SENT TO VIETNAM TO REPLACE FU.
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